

MIGRANTS IN SHANGHAI: AN ANALYSIS
OF VERBAL PEJORATION IN WEIBO

by

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THESIS ABSTRACT

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This thesis examines 硬盘 *Yingpan* ‘hard drive,’ a newly created online derogatory code word referring to the migrants in Shanghai against the historical background of discrimination of migrants in Shanghai. Based on corpus data from Chinese social media, I examine the usage patterns of this derogatory word. The results show four salient speech acts in which this word is used. These are 1) complaints about migrants, 2) abusive commands, 3) self-victimization of the locals, and 4) lamentation over the loss of Shanghai identity. These usage patterns reflect the impacts of societal changes as a result of mass migration in contemporary China. This study has implications for research of migration and the consequential social tensions in societies across the globe.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION: CHINESE REGIONAL IDENTITY

A Chinese individual's identity in terms of space and territory differs from the native place identity in Europe and North America in many ways. The complexity of Chinese spoken languages or regional dialects can vary within 20-mile perimeters, which distinguishes two or more groups of people whose mother tongue are not mutually intelligible. Although urban citizens now care less about their ancestral home or their grandfather's birthplace, this concept is still rooted in the residents of small towns and rural areas and recorded in the official documents. In addition, the native soil has a strong impact on the configuration of identity. Migrants normally consider their birthplace as the hometown where their parents or grandparents reside, but a number of them attempt to identify themselves as the residents of the place they live currently. Meanwhile, the native inhabitants of Shanghai, Beijing, and other major cities like to clarify that their cities are their home place but not migrants'; no matter how long they have lived there. More importantly, the Household Registration or the *Hukou* System institutionally segregates native inhabitants of cities and migrants in housing, employment, education and healthcare, because the government attempts to limit social mobility for migrants from rural areas. This practice also causes difficulties to conceptualize the regional identity of an individual: one can obtain the *hukou* that is registered under a different city than his/her birthplace through marriage or employment; whereas, an individual cannot obtain his/her birthplace *hukou* due to his/her parents whose *hukou* are registered somewhere else.

Overall, these factors are all considered to construct the identity of Shanghai people, Shanghainese.

Shanghai and Shanghainese

In Shanghai, China's largest city, several Shanghai identities have been constructed by different social standards throughout the city's history. For example: to be considered a "Shanghai local," one's family must have resided in Shanghai for three generations and speak the local dialect. According to the legal standards, only those possessing a Shanghai *hukou* are considered its residents. Meanwhile, from a globalization perspective, anyone who studies, works or lives in Shanghai can claim to be a Shanghai inhabitant. During the late Qing dynasty and the Republican period, Western settlers, who had established their own political and military power in Shanghai, formed a unique identity: Shanghailanders, who were associated with their dominant role in the city. However, none of the local Shanghai residents, Shanghai inhabitants, or Shanghailanders can pinpoint both the historical and contemporary identity of Shanghai people regarding the variations of time, social class, intellectual discourse, and municipal institutions. Alexander Des Forges skillfully borrows the term *Szahaenin* (Shanghai People) from the Shanghai dialect and uses it as the subject in his work *Mediasphere Shanghai* (2007). Language has become the paradigm to construct identity. *Szahaenin* is therefore a term of self-identification by Shanghai locals. The implication of the self-identification of *Szahaenin* reveals the exclusivist characteristics of this social group and their interior culture.

Migrants in Shanghai

As the most modernized and largest Chinese city, Shanghai has always been the top destination for migrants throughout history. The counterpart of Shanghainese, the outsiders or migrants, has also evolved with the changes of social structure, implementation of new policies and the dramatic development of Shanghai's culture in modern China. The terms *Subei ren* (Subei people), *Xiangxia ren* (rural people), *Waidi ren* (outsiders), and *Yingpan ren* (hard drive people) have all been successively adopted by Shanghainese to use as a negative referential noun for the migrants. These terms help to identify what is known as *the other* in Shanghai.

Shanghainese and Migrants

Starting from discrimination against *Subei ren* in the early Shanghai migration wave, Shanghainese have been known for their exclusivist characters. Moreover, since the People's Republic of China *Hukou* Registration Regulation was signed into law in 1958, a bifurcated social order was produced in the major Chinese cities (Banister, 1987). The Shanghainese and rural migrants represented two different classes in Shanghai society, and the gap between them was greatly increased. In the 2010s, this conflict was shifted from the urban and rural to the local and outsider as the *hukou* system was softened and more skilled-labor entered Shanghai (Wang, Guo and Cheng, 2013). In all, the *self's* prejudice and discrimination against the *other* in Shanghai has not ceased, as the hierarchical conflicts still exist. Shanghainese try to demonstrate their superiority of urban culture, language and social status (*hukou*) and preserve privilege, lifestyle and reputation. At the same time migrants fight for their equal right to live here

and enjoy the local privilege, such as education and social welfare.

Cyberspace provides a platform for *Waidi ren* to unify a frontline to defend their right to live in Shanghai by sharing useful information, establishing the connections with fellow-townsmen, and expressing their anger towards inequality and Shanghainese's discrimination against them. The most popular Chinese social media sites —Weibo, Baidu, Zhihu, and Wechat— have all become the battleground where Shanghainese and *Waidi ren* fight. Between the two groups abusive language and cyber bullying occur. Shanghainese, in the same way, ventilate their dissatisfaction about the growing population of the migrants in their hometown on the Internet: the crime, the uncivilized manners, the traffic jams, the crowdedness and, most importantly, the crisis of low penetration of the Shanghai language. On Feb 4th, 2009, Shanghai-based press, *Xinminwanbao* published an article named 新英雄闯荡上海滩，不限户籍个个精英 'New Heroes make living in Shanghai, each one of them is an elite no matter his/her origin.' In this article, the author bluntly put forth that speaking Shanghai dialect is a sign of an uncivilized manner in the Shanghai Pudong New Area, the financial hub, which has the highest density of migrants. The discourse about the Shanghai dialect damaged Shanghainese's dignity and aroused their rage. Even though the author Dawei Li apologized to the public on the following day, Shanghai netizens switched their target onto *Waidi ren* on the Internet. Kuandaishan Life (KDS), one of the most influential Shanghai-based forums, served as a foothold for Shanghainese in this cyber warfare. Shanghainese unscrupulously insulted the outsiders in KDS, and the forum supervisor

had to censor *Waidi ren* to stop cyber bullying as well as to keep a positive and friendly environment.

Chinese netizens have abundant experience with fighting censorship. Shanghainese first used *Waidi ren*'s pinyin acronym, *WDR*, to pass by the censorship but failed after the list of sensitive words was updated. Netizens followed this by linking *WD* and *Western Digital* (*Xibu Shuju* in pinyin), the American data storage company, to coin the word *Xishu ren* 'western digital person.' This challenged the forum's censorship because KDS was one of the company's agents in Shanghai. Despite the success of *Xishu ren* coinage, this abbreviation of Western Digital person's Chinese translation sounded foreign and did not get popularized on KDS. Finally, after the netizens brainstormed, they replaced *Xishu ren* with 硬盘 *Ying pan* 'hard drive,' which is one of the Western Digital Corporation's main products. 硬盘 *Ying pan*, this new referential noun applied for the migrants in Shanghai, is a Chinese word rather than an ambivalent abbreviation (*Xishu*). It also accords with the linguistic features of Chinese netspeak: metaphoric, humorous, ironic, creative, Internet-related, and infusing old words with new meaning (Wang, 2013: 5-15). Second, using 硬盘 *Ying pan* or 硬盘人 *Ying pan ren* 'Yingpan people' as a hidden code for *Wadi ren* in KDS can prevent it from being censored for its original meaning, "hard drive"; otherwise, KDS would lose part of its services and functionality since electronic devices are a large section in this forum. The mind game between Shanghai netizens in KDS and Chinese Internet censorship gave birth to the Chinese neology 硬盘 *Ying pan*, which has become very controversial online.

Addressing migrants by 硬盘 *Ying pan*, an object's name that has aggravated the existing tension between Shanghainese and *Waidi ren*. However, this social slur seems different than the previous terms *Subei ren*, *Xiangxia ren*, *Waidi ren* and other negative labels in many ways. To study this new label of the *other* in Shanghai, I first discussed Shanghainese's discrimination against migrants in the past, and then analyzed those old labels in the context of social development. Second, I used the corpus to collect data for quantitative and qualitative analysis of 硬盘 *Yingpan*. Third, I incorporated the data with former studies on migrants and social development to discuss the change of the relationship between the perceptions of the *self* and the *other* in Shanghai.

CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF DISCRIMINATION

Migrants in Shanghai

Even before the Treaty of Nanking that opened Shanghai to international trade, it had been a town for domestic migrants attracting merchants from Guangdong, Shandong, Zhejiang, Fujian, and Anhui provinces who established guilds in this city and developed an emerging trade center with its ideal geographical location at the mouth of the Yangtze River (Johnson, 1993). Due to Western influence, particularly the Treaty of Nanking and the open port policy, Shanghai quickly developed into a dynamic metropolis. Foreign settlers depicted Shanghai in the late Qing dynasty and the Republican period as a paradise for adventurers or Paris in the East, which famed real estate tycoon Silas Hardoon, millionaire hotelier Victor Sassoon, and numerous Shanghailanders. In addition, Shanghai created a safe shelter that accepted a diverse international community consisting of White Russians, Jewish refugees, and Korean patriots and gave them a possibility to start a new life. The arrival of foreigners and the creation of trade stimulated a new wave of domestic migration to Shanghai from Guangdong.

Besides the merchants, workers, and adventurers, social elites also fled from Zhejiang province and the rest of the Jiangnan area to Shanghai to seek protection and a new life after the Taiping rebels occupied Nanking and Suzhou in 1853 and 1860 (Goodman, 1995). On the other hand, the port of Shanghai and sea-trade increased the change of transportation that connected northern and southern China by replacing the

passage boats on the Grand Canal with the ships transporting goods and people along the coast. Subsequently, cities such as Yangzhou, formerly a symbol of elegance and prosperity, in northern Jiangsu and Shandong declined as the Grand Canal lost their importance for sea transportation. Furthermore, when the Yellow River changed its course in 1853, the Grand Canal was split and caused in a constant cycle of floods, famine, and poverty in Shandong and the northern Jiangsu region (Honig, 1992). People in northern Jiangsu suffered from natural disasters and economic recession, and many of them crossed the Yangtze River flocking to Shanghai as refugees. Unlike the migrants from the Jiangnan area who started to dominate the critical banking, shipping and silk production sectors (Goodman, 1995), these people from the north side of the Yangtze worked in undesired positions such as rickshaw pullers, dock workers and maids. They came as refugees, worked as unskilled laborers and lived in straw huts, and were commonly known as *Subei ren*.

Subei and Subei Ren

When Yangzhou and northern Jiangsu had been prosperous before the mid-nineteenth century, *Subei ren* or *Jiangbei* people were not recognized as a major social category in Shanghai. Compared to other homogenous groups in Shanghai, the press and literature identified them by their hometowns such as Wuxi people, Ningbo people, and Suzhou people, but rarely as Yangzhou people, Huai'an people or other Subei area natives (Honig, 1992:18-19). In her book *Creating Chinese Ethnicity: Subei in Shanghai, 1850-1980*, Emily Honig argues that *Subei ren* as a unified homogenous group was a metaphor for low class, and the idea of the Subei area

emerged only in the context of social and economic changes that culminated in the mid-nineteenth century (1992:20).

The Subei area is hard to gauge either in the history or even today because it has never been governed as an administrative region, and its economy, language, culture, and lifestyle were very diverse. Geographically speaking, Subei consists of the part of Jiangsu province north of the Yangtze River with the cities of Yangzhou, Xuzhou, Yancheng, Huai'an and Lianyungang, but also includes Nantong and a part of Nanjing, whereas, they are more often considered belonging to the Jiangnan region (Feng, 1985:76).

Subei ren were identified by their clothing, workplace, behavior, dialect, and accent that applied to more than just the people from northern Jiangsu. Migrants from Shandong and Anhui province in Shanghai were categorized as *Subei ren* too; the term became so broad, and so widely used by Shanghainese, that they even labeled Puerto Rican and African American Subway passengers in New York as '*Subei ren*' because of their ill-manner (Honig, 1992). On the other hand, the constructed identity of *Subei ren* was denied by native people from northern Jiangsu province. There, due to the difference in language, custom and culture, this new unified identity was hard to be recognized by all Subei migrants. For example, although there were native place associations representing the Subei region, the heads of these organizations were Shanghainese rather than the native *Subei ren*. These organizations were short-lived and overshadowed by Yangzhou and Yancheng guilds, which were more specific in location for people to have an association with the native place and people (Honig,

92). Yangzhou, Nantong, Yancheng and all Subei migrants felt angry about being discriminated against with derogatory terms such as Subei swine but felt shameful to accept *Subei ren* too. Internally, there was another hierarchy: inside Subei that Yangzhou and Nantong natives tried to distinguish themselves from *Subei ren* or Yancheng and Huai'an by declaring their historical affiliation with Jiangnan culture. The concept of the Subei region was not constructed or accepted by its native people, and in fact, the image of *Subei ren* as the *other* was defined by Shanghainese and the mainstream media in Shanghai.

From the time Shanghai opened its port to trade in 1843 until 1949, the city had become the largest immigrant city in Chinese history. According to the 1949 Shanghai census details that 86.9% of the population was born outside Shanghai and 13.7 % were from the Subei region (Huaiyin, Yancheng and Yangzhou) (Lu, 1995). 29.9% of Shaoxing and Ningbo natives were regarded as Shanghainese and model citizens while *Subei ren* were looked down upon as Subei swine and treated as outsiders. Jiangnan people controlled the discourse and media in press and novels, in which they vilified the *Subei ren* about their occupations and appearance. Furthermore, the image of *Subei ren* as unsanitary, rude and uneducated was constricted by the cultural development in Shanghai. Since the 1890s, Shanghai elites have been producing *Haipai Wenxue* 'Shanghai style literature' and developing Shanghai into a metropolis and cultural center in the Wu area, replacing the former cultural dominant city Suzhou and confronting the northern cultural capital Beijing (DesForges, 2007). Shanghai and its culture portrayed by the guidebooks, newspaper,

novels, illustration collections, and films attracted visitors and quickly assimilated migrants to Shanghainese. The following excerpt from *Shanghai Fengsu Suoji* records the speed of migrant's assimilation in Shanghai and the major characteristics of Shanghainese:

Of all the metropolises in all the countries in the world, the one whose citizens are strongest in the ability to assimilate is Shanghai. No matter where a person is from, once he or she reaches Shanghai, he or she cannot avoid three habits: following the trends of the times, devoting the attention to luxury, and esteeming slipperiness. If this does not happen, he or she probably cannot become a true Shanghai person (Wu, 1995:102-103).

The first three habits required people to be educated to read a newspaper and have money to consume and participate in commerce, which did not apply to those Subei migrants who were formerly Subei farmers, refugees, and manual laborers. As the merchant and social elites migrated from Guangdong and the Jiangnan area to work in trade and banking services and assimilated to become Shanghainese, *Subei ren* and other refugees conserved their old lifestyle, grew isolated and were discriminated against in Shanghai. Moreover, these two groups of people represented two classes: one was actively involved with the development of Shanghai's *self*-culture; the other was at the bottom of the social hierarchy. Therefore, *Subei ren* who accounted for 13.7% of Shanghai's population and undertook undesired jobs in Shanghai became a metaphor for low class and the *other* in the glorious Paris of the East.

Subei Ren in Shanghai (1949-1978)

After 1949, the Chinese Communist Party tried to eliminate the social classes and break the bond of native place associations to create an egalitarian society. The political status of *Subei ren* was turned over, and their social status was elevated in Shanghai. First, *Subei ren* served as officers and communist cadres in the most powerful communist red army, the New Fourth Army, which liberated Shanghai. This service changed the impression of Subei among the Shanghainese (Bergere, 2009). Second, during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), the middle peasants and poor peasants had the privilege to access good job opportunities and education, and this applied to most *Subei ren*. Third, since the first major wave of Subei migrants to Shanghai in the 1860s, the second generation and their descendants were born in Shanghai and acquired a Shanghai Hukou in 1958 when the registration system was put in practice.

However, their political status change could not permanently solve the discrimination against them by the modern Shanghainese because *Subei ren*'s economic and cultural condition was lacked behind. A smooth political transaction was conducted by General Chen Geng's command to ensure Shanghai's light industry was intact to drive the national economy (Bergere, 2009). The previous economic structure remained operational at the beginning of PRC; *Subei ren* still worked in barber shops, sanitary works, and other unskilled labor positions. Comparing *Subei ren*'s employment rate in the rickshaw labor force between 1949 and 1958, it shows that there was a drop from 95.7% to 77% but was significant enough for Shanghainese to keep the bias against them while the economic disparity accumulated for several

decades. Without economic support, the majority of *Subei ren* dwelled in shantytowns known as “*Jiangbei nong*” from Hongzhen, Zhabei to Yangpu and Putuo (He, 2006). On the other hand, the long-term bias that *Subei ren* were vulgar and illiterate again was elaborated in the Shanghai films and literature.

Artist Zhang Weiping created a comic character *Sanmao* ‘Three Hairs’ based on a Shanghai street child born in Subei, in the famous comic *Sanmao Liulang Ji* serialized in *Ta Kung Pao* since 1947 and then produced in films, cartoons, and animations. *Sanmao* encounters inequality, swindle, bullies, poverty, hunger, and slavery as a Subei orphan. His experience reveals the cruel hierarchical society that exists in Shanghai. Ironically in the movie *Sanmao Xue Shengyi* ‘Sanmao studies business,’ Sanmao’s Subei relative in Shanghai and mentor teaches and forces him to pilfer. His second mentor is a Subei barber whose wife sells Sanmao to a blind fortune teller. *Subei ren*’s associations with barber shops, vagabonds, poverty, and crime are all depicted in this film from 1958. Shanghainese’s discrimination against *Subei ren* was prevailed throughout in the 1970s and 1980s, and this awareness was very specific in marriage arrangements. For example, Shanghainese parents used the models of wristwatch as hidden language to refer to a family which had one parent or two parents with Subei origin. At that time, the popular Shanghai brand watch had two models: “full steel” and “half steel.” Since the pronunciation of steel is close to “Jiang ‘river’” in the Shanghai dialect, Shanghainese would refer “full steel” and “half steel” to “two Jiangbei parents” and “one Jiangbei parent” in one’s family. Shanghainese parents desired ethnic qualities of a pure Shanghainese marriage and consider any family with Subei

heritage as low-class. Subsequently, the constituent of “steel” in one’s family was used as a phrase for Shanghainese to judge the family background in a marriage arrangement (He, 2006). Subei descendants’ accent was hard to conceal and became the most identifiable feature of *Subei ren* in this context. Despite being born in Shanghai, the long-term established discrimination against them kept distinguishing the Subei ethnical Shanghainese from the rest of the Shanghai citizens. In Shanghai’s economy and culture, *Subei ren* continued to serve as the role of the *other*.

Subei Ren and Shanghainese

The lifestyle difference between their residential district Zhabei and the metropolitan area on the Nanjing road and Huaihai road made Subei migrants realize they were not in the ‘real’ Shanghai. For those *Subei ren* who were born in Shanghai and possess a Shanghai *hukou*, they were still not recognized as a local Shanghainese in this society because of their heritage and residents outside the metropolis. In the novel of *Fuping* (2005), Guangming, from a poor Subei family in Shanghai, makes his effort to emulate a Shanghainese’s lifestyle: wearing a suit, a wristwatch and dress shoes, speaking Shanghai dialect rather than Subei dialect. Guangming is desperate to get rid of the label ‘Subei’ for being recognized as an upper-class Shanghainese and distinguishing himself from the discriminatory *other*, but no matter how hard he tries, he is not able to conceal his Subei accent. In the end, his Subei fellows distance themselves from Guangming while the Shanghainese laugh at him (Wang, 2005:166-167). Guangming, as a protagonist in the novel, represents another narrative of *Subei ren* who want to be identified as modern Shanghainese though blending into

the upper-class. Nevertheless, a superficial change of appearance cannot help but develop a spiritual and material life for those who live in a shantytown and work as unskilled labor. In Shanghai from the 1950s to the 1980s, which Qian Yanwen (2013) classifies as a closing stage for migrants, the concept of the Subei region had been unified and Subei's identity was embodied in their accent, residential and economic condition. In other words, Subei migrants and their descendants, who constituted approximately 13.7% of the Shanghai population, were considered as the *other* in Shanghai.

Since the late Qing dynasty, *Subei ren* have frequently appeared in the media, from novels, essays, literature, plays, reportage, child's reading to films, TV shows, and talk shows, which all expose the social injustice they encountered. Chinese scholars and *Subei ren* developed their own discourse and image to express the anger against this discrimination. The famous writer Zhu Ziqing claimed to be a Yangzhou person and wrote an essay *Wo shi Yangzhouren* (1946) 'I am a Yangzhou person' for making affiliation with Yangzhou and being proud of this identity. Wang Xiaoying, a female writer born in the Jiangnan area insisted to proclaim herself as a girl from Subei even under the pressure of her Ningbo grandmother (1980). In Cheng Naishan's *Qiongjie* (1984) 'Poor Street,' she depicts a successful Subei migrant in Shanghai—Zhang Xianglin who breaks the long-term established Subei image in the media. Zhang Xianglin suffers discrimination at school for being the offspring of a Subei rickshaw puller, but he makes a great effort to get accepted by Fudan University. More importantly, the achievement does not lead him to pursue an upper-class culture or

blindly get rid of the Subei label. On the first day of his college life, he wrote *Yancheng* in large character in the box of ‘ancestral origin’ on his registration card to show his pride of being from a Subei family and make those gags who look down on *Subei ren*. Later, Xianglin teaches at Haoguang junior high school, in which most of the students are Subei descendants, to encourage them to study hard to change the bias towards and stereotype about *Subei ren*. Liu Guoliang, one of Xianglin’s students, reveres his teacher as a role model and decides to assist his family economically while he applies for a good high school (Cheng, 1984:11). In these examples *Subei ren* all take the label upon themselves, claiming in a proud and dignified way.

In traditional Chinese society, education was valued; Ningbo and Suzhou migrants were then respected as model citizens in Shanghai because they were the descendants of literati who wanted to remain distinguishable from those who worked as manual labor. Coincidentally, *Subei ren*’s grandparents and parents were refugees, nannies, barbers, rickshaw pullers, boatman, janitors, and other unskilled laborers. *Subei ren*’s occupational characteristics were a strong factor that caused discrimination against them and made them outsiders in Shanghai. On the other hand, *Subei ren* struggled with the essentials to sustain themselves, which consequently made them care less about education. The deficiency in education and culture is another reason why *Subei ren* became the undesired *other* in modern Shanghai society. Furthermore, shantytowns, the symbol of *Subei ren*’s backwardness were gradually demolished or reorganized in the process of Shanghai’s urbanization. The rise of new *Subei ren*, like Zhang Xianglin and Liu Guolin, and the high level of education in urban China in the 80s have

corrected the shackle of the biased impression.

Interim Conclusion

The concept of ‘Subei area’ and ‘*Subei ren*’ lacks clarity in the first place since no records can be traced until the mid-eighteenth century when Shanghai rose as a junction of the trade and later became the center in the Wu culture. Because of the differences in economic power, social, culture, and language between the north and south sides of the Yangtze River, Subei and *Subei ren* were constructed in the context of social hierarchy in Shanghai versus the migrants from Ningbo, Suzhou, and Jiangnan. The region of Subei varied from the narrow definition encompassing Yangzhou, Yancheng, Huai’an, Lianyungang, Xuzhou and Suqian, and extending to Taizhou and Nantong, and even includes parts of Anhui and Shandong province. Subei is a collective concept composed of geography, culture, language and economy. This homogeneous group was not formed from its internal members, but often appears as *the other* that was labeled and defined by the Shanghainese (self-centered) in the context of urban and economic development. After 1949, the figure of *Subei ren* was still imprinted onto citizens’ minds, as inferior to the real Shanghainese. Subei identity was embodied in the ancestral origin, the place of living and the accent that was still associated with geography, culture, language and economy. In short, *Subei ren* served as *the other* in Shanghai’s modernization until the sense of native place and the economic gap lost importance in the 1980s.

Xiangxia Ren and Waidi Ren in Shanghai

Hukou

Since the end of the 1980s, the negative narratives about Subei and *Subei ren* were gradually submerged by the new migration wave, the trend of urbanization, globalization, and the concept of a harmonious society; the bias and discrimination against *Subei ren* become rare in modern Shanghai. Meanwhile, new migrants who have entered Shanghai have been condemned by the Shanghainese and have become the new *other* in the economic and social development. This new *other* shared many similar characteristics with the *Subei ren* of the past: poor, uneducated, maleficent, migratory and unsanitary. On the other hand, aside from the discrimination and bias shown by the natives, the migrants in this new wave face a new challenge, the Hukou system, which sets barriers to settle down permanently in Shanghai.

On the eve of the founding of the People's Republic of China, Shanghai city was overwhelmed by wartime refugees from the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945) and the Civil War (1945-1949). To solve the issues of unemployment and dearth of foods in Shanghai, the Communist Party urged the refugees to go or return to Shanghai's countryside where the land reform was implemented (Cheng and Selden, 1994:647). By 1952, this new wave of (re)settlement increased Shanghai's population from 5 million to 6.2 million, in which approximately 33% of the people were from the rural areas (Bergere, 2009:308). Therefore, in 1952, even disregarding the original agricultural population, approximately, more than 12% Shanghai population was comprised of eight hundred thousand people with rural origins. This significant

demographic change introduced a new representative group, that is, rural to urban migrants who were different than the previous internal-migrants in the Late Qing dynasty and the Republican era. Rural to urban migrations also happened in other major cities in the early 50s that China's urban population percentage boosted from 10.6% to 14.6% with a net gain of 34.6 million.

In 1958, the Party officially introduced *People's Republic of China Hukou Registration Regulation* to react the unprecedented speed of urbanization (Kirkby, 1985:107). The purpose of the *hukou* system for the central government is to scrutinize the social mobility and control internal migration, specifically whom rural people moved away from the agricultural sector. The *hukou* system decisively divides Chinese people into agricultural households and non-agricultural households, in which prioritizes city over the countryside while favoring urban citizens over the peasants. Under this mechanism, urban citizens received free access to social welfare, education, and healthcare in their residential city, but the rural registered people could only find resources in their village community. Thus, the gap between the development of city and countryside has been growing continuously. Although large-scale intra-migration did not occur until the late 80s, the implementation of the *hukou* system has created the impression those agricultural and non-agricultural households.

Xiangxia Ren

Farmers and their children who own land in the countryside are classified as agricultural households or labeled *Xiangxia ren* by urbanites. The stereotype that people of rural-origin, *Xiangxia ren* in Chinese are backward and illiterate, was created in early Chinese history and first recorded in the official dynastic history of the State of Liang in the Northern-Southern period (502-557) of the Northern and Southern Dynasties. The use of *Xiangxia ren* became popular in the Ming-Qing novels that described the discrimination against them in the Ming-Qing cities. In a later novel, *The Travel of Lao Can* (1907), the term *Xiangxia ren* more often refers to ignorance rather than a rural origin. Since the urbanization progressed, *Xiangxia ren* has been regarded as an epithet for countrymen or peasants. The term *Xiangxia ren* has a derogatory meaning: such self-abashed, superstitious, pitiful, rude and ignorant. Its variety—*xiangbalao*—is equivalent to the English term, country bumpkin or yokel. In old Shanghai, the unenlightened and ignorant rural-origin migrants already existed in the Shanghainese's stereotype of cognitive value.

Take Mao Dun's *Midnight* (1931) as an example: when the protagonist brought his father from the countryside to Shanghai, the populous crowd, fast cars, the fashion worn by women and the skyscrapers that he had never seen triggered his heart attack, and thus he died suddenly upon arrival in Shanghai. This dramatic narrative in the story describes the rural-urban migrant's first encounter with a modern city like Shanghai. Urban and rural cultures were quite different. Urban citizens laughed at rural people's appearance and thought they were simple and honest. Individual of

rural-origin experienced the bias from the urban locals in many circumstances. Thus, during the late Qing dynasty and republican era, many rural-to-urban migrants, who were not from Subei, were involuntarily labeled *Subei ren*. *Xiangxia ren* as a new stratum was constructed and took the place of “*Subei ren*” when the hundreds of thousands of people from the countryside flocked to Shanghai looking for job opportunities when the market re-opening in the late 80s.

The Chinese economic reform started in December 1978. It enabled a surplus of millions of rural laborers. While the rural areas experienced an increased agricultural productivity, the cities saw a great demand for labor. The economic development drove free mobility for the rural people and a fast urbanization across China (Yang, Tian, von Oudenhoven, Hofstra and Wang, 2010: 202–216). Shanghai as China’s largest city and the intermediary between the West and China, gained the central government’s special attention, received foreign investments and attracted migrants to rebuild the market economy after several decades. In addition, the Special Economic Zone in the Pudong New Area was designated to establish the modern financial hub in China. As Shanghai was expanding its economic power and influence, millions of migrants flocked to this city for opportunities. This wave of migrants in the 1980s was encouraged by the central government’s urbanization project and shared many similarities with the early urban development and migration in Shanghai in the late Qing dynasty. Migrants with minimal education from rural areas and small towns found menial jobs in factories, construction and sanitation like the *Subei ren* in the past. On the other hand, the Shanghainese’s arrogance was still present and even

aggravated to an extent with the success of Shanghai's rapid economic development, revived international reputation, city culture, lifestyle as well as the value of the Shanghai *hukou*. Shanghainese prejudice against migrants and the *hukou* policy were the two critical factors that constructed the new *other* in the context of Shanghai society.

Xiangxia Ren and Shanghainese

The great large gap between the urban and rural economic development and the urban-rural population structure laid the foundation for China's internal migration phenomenon in the late 1980s. According to the *Fifth National Population Census of the People's Republic of China* (2000), Shanghai as the most modernized city in mainland China had the highest percentage of registered citizens (63.08%) without a rural background, but more than six million citizens, who were registered in the countryside, inhabited Shanghai in 2000. The rapid urbanization from the late 1980s to 1990s completely shaped the social structure of Shanghai and challenged the rural migrants' previous lifestyles, values, and social psychology. Due to the urban-rural gap, the migration of peasants to cities is not merely a spatial migration but also a "cultural migration" in the modern sense (Zhu, 2006). With limited education and low skills, it is hard for the rural migrants to find a decent job with sufficient income that afford them to consume culture in Shanghai. Moreover, the social intercourse of the rural migrants is related to their occupations and native place. Since most of the rural migrants found a job in manual labor sector through connection with fellow townsmen or relatives, the social circle is small and rarely contacted local Shanghainese (Zhu,

2006: 143). However, Shanghai's economic power, reputation and cultural production in China fulfill Shanghainese's pride and sense of superiority. Thereafter, the millions of rural migrants in Shanghai have formed a new social class whose economic condition, social sphere and cultural life are different than Shanghainese. In the bifurcated Shanghai society, Shanghainese gave the term *Xiangxia ren* an extreme negative language environment as an epithet to address those rural-to-urban migrants.

The *hukou* system institutionally defines the rural-migrants as inferior citizens or *the other* in Shanghai. Many scholars, such as Mingqiong Zhang, Cherrie Jiuhua Zhu, and Charis Nyland (2014), have argued that the *hukou* system is not merely a mechanism of social control but also a distribution of hierarchy. Urban citizens are economically and socially superior to rural people with vastly different opportunities, education, social welfare and obligations (2014:1443). The possession of an agricultural *hukou* is like a social stigma in Shanghai, in which agricultural residents frequently encountered prejudice and inequality because they are considered "backward." This imagery is furthered by how they are portrayed negatively in literature (Kuang and Liu, 2012:2). It is very hard for agricultural residents to "upgrade" their *hukou* to non-agricultural status, and it is even more impossible for them to get a Shanghai urban *hukou*; unless the resident obtains a college degree, joins the Communist Party, or makes a great investment in the local business (Zhang, 2002:313). Rural-migrants could not access the urban social welfare system and were discriminated against in the labor market. Although urban citizens' discrimination against rural-migrants occurs in Beijing, Nanjing and other Chinese cities too,

Shanghai has taken it to another level. Since the late 1980s, Shanghainese have indiscriminately labeled *Xiangxia ren* all lower-class migrants. Like “*Subei ren*” used to be the metaphor for all low-class people in Shanghai, *Xiangxia ren* has served as a new implication for *the other* in the context of social development.

Waidi Ren and Shanghainese

The *Fifth National Population Census of the People’s Republic of China* indicated more than 5.3 million inhabitants in Shanghai, 32.82% of the urban population in 2000, did not possess a local *hukou*. Along with the rural migrants, citizens from second and third-tier cities entered Shanghai for business opportunity and a better life. Urban migrants and rural migrants share the same social status as migrant and under a large category of *Waidi ren*, ‘outsiders’ in the Chinese social context. Originally, the lexicon *Waidi ren* is a neutral referential noun, but it varies in different context. The newspapers and media address those inhabitants living in the city without a local *hukou* as a “foreign population” or “floating population” rather than intra-migrant population because of their mobile and insecure status. The word *foreign* explicitly places the migrants in *the other* position, and the word *floater* has a similar meaning as the word *vagabond* in Chinese. The local citizens constantly associate *Waidi ren* with crimes because they are not permanently attached to this community and do not have the same moral responsibilities as someone who is attached. In return, *Waidi ren* do not feel attached since they are treated like thieves by the locals (Zhang, 2002: 318). Nevertheless, there are still many middle and

upper-class migrants in Shanghai, who are well-educated or even have an overseas background.

Because of the *hukou* system, urban migrants are disadvantaged on the Shanghai labor market, too. Since the urban unemployment crisis which laid off millions of workers in China in 1997, the Shanghai labor market has become very competitive (Wang, Guo and Cheng, 2015: 2386). Subsequently, the local government has implemented discriminatory policies against migrants in reaction to the unemployment crisis. The employers started laying off migrant workers to force them to leave Shanghai and were prohibited hiring migrants into certain positions in order to make the labor market and society stable (Wang, Guo and Cheng, 2015: 2387). Although these regulations were terminated, the local *hukou* still serves as a ticket or wild card in the Shanghai labor market, and recruiters are more likely hire Shanghainese than the migrants. Among the other migrants' destination city, Shanghai is the place where the migrants and the locals have the most conflicts. The Shanghai *hukou* serves as a psychological wall that keeps the migrants from Shanghai and its citizens while it elevates Shanghainese's social status and reinforces their arrogance.

Baohua Zhou in 2010 conducted a telephone survey in which he interviewed 222 Shanghainese and 226 migrant adults who have lived in Shanghai for 13 years on average, regarding their interpersonal communication. His result found that migrants make their social network based on geographical affiliation, so the majority of their friends are migrants as well: 12.1% of migrants do not have any Shanghainese

friends, 37.2% of migrants have less than ten Shanghainese friends. Likewise, 26.1% of Shanghainese do not develop any friendships with migrants. Shanghainese's exclusivist trait is the main factor that influences migrants' immersion and affiliation about Shanghai. 33.6% of migrants express that they have been discriminated by Shanghainese and 65.8% have seen others being marginalized.

Interim Conclusion

Yi (1999) argues that the characteristics of Shanghainese are tacit and deep-seated in their lifestyle, consciousness, and culture: they pursue fashion, regard the spirit of the contract, stress dress code, and pay great attention to detail. This differentiates from the citizens from the rest of China and greatly resembles the lifestyle and attitudes of westerners. Shanghai dialect has been the most common signifier to recognize Shanghainese, as well as a tool to exclude outsiders. Shanghainese had little desire to contact outsiders who did not speak Shanghai dialect or dressed poorly (Kuang and Liu, 2012). Despite the different language and attire, outsiders are very easy to be identified in Shanghai (Yu, 1992). It is true that under the western influence, Shanghainese have developed into a special ethical community who are proud of, and even believe, their lifestyle, beliefs, and their civilization are superior compared to others in China (Yu, 1992: 67). This mentality drives Shanghainese to reckon themselves as "first-class citizens" in their home city and exclude the migrants as *the other*.

As discussed previously, because of the geographical, economic, and cultural differences, migrants from the Jiangnan area and *Subei ren* encountered the opposite

treatment in Shanghai. *Subei ren* even became a metaphorical label for all the low-class people. In modern Shanghai, this economic and cultural gap is manifested by the differences between urban and rural as well as natives and outsiders. Moreover, new migrants' political and social status is also restricted by the *hukou* system that aggravates the level of inequality and discrimination. *Xiangxia ren* has become the new metaphor for the low-class people because of its "backward" rural background in the modern society. Meanwhile, *Waidi ren* has shifted from a neutral referential pronoun for the migrants to a derogatory class. *Xiangxia ren* and *Waidi ren* have overlapped each other in certain ways at the beginning of new migration wave. As the number of middle and upper-class migrants greatly increased in Shanghai, the narrative of *Waidi ren* have gradually dominated in the society. On the other hand, Shanghainese's discriminatory discourse against migrants has been criticized and exposed by the media. These external factors stimulate a dramatic shape of Shanghainese and *Waidi ren*'s relationship and redefine *the other* in Shanghai. This new epithet 硬盘 *yingpan* is thus born on the Internet, which is mentioned in the introduction and to be analyzed in the later chapters.

CHAPTER III

DATA AND METHODOLOGY

This study is based on corpus data from Beijing Language and Culture University's online corpus (BCC) website- *bcc.blc.edu.cn*. This corpus is one of the most advanced Chinese search engines with 15 billion words in one of the following genres: the press, literature, Weibo (social media), science, and ancient text. BCC also provides cross-genre search that not only enables me to gain the data from the different sources at once but also notes the genre, which will be useful for later discussion.

Data retrieval was conducted by inserting the Chinese characters 硬盘 *Yingpan* and pinyin acronym "YP" as two keywords for a cross-genre search. The corpus automatically retrieves the data from the different texts and displays the search results in what is known as concordances, that is, instances of the use of the keyword highlighted in its immediate sentential context. In the exploratory research, a total of 14199 concordances of 硬盘 and 1176 concordances of YP retrieved in this way were used as the database of this study. Two observations were made from this exploratory research of the concordances: 1) Due to the fact that to the Chinese word 硬盘 *Yingpan* as well as YP is a polysemy, the results contained a high volume of false positives that refer to its primary usage 'hard-drive' in Chinese; 2) Among the positive results, the word 上海 'Shanghai' is a high-frequency collocate. Based on these two observations, a refined research was conducted with the previous search results in order to eliminate the false positives and draw the desired results by adding the Chinese characters 上海 'Shanghai' along with the respective keywords to constrain the search.

The refined search returns 30 results from 硬盘 *Yingpan*-上海 search and 124 results from YP-上海. Although this filtering method may filter out non-false positive results, it provides a convenient way to create a useful and workable database. Next, 154 sentences were manually annotated to make sure they are relevant to the researching project. The manual annotation yielded a final database of 152 concordances with 28 硬盘 *Yingpan* 上海 and 124 YP 上海. 152 concordances are all from Weibo, and this 100% ratio suggests 硬盘 *Yingpan*'s neologism has a very limited domain of usage and has not spread out to other mediums.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS

Knowing the regional identity of the authors can help contextualize the keyword 硬盘 *Yingpan* and the stance of the author when they use it. Presumably, there are three different identifiable groups of authors who will use 硬盘 *Yingpan* in their blogs: Shanghainese, migrants, and a third-party. Also, migrants' self-identification of 硬盘 *Yingpan* is essential to determine whether it is a new social category or an acceptable neutral referential noun. BCC can only trace the information of credible sources, which means it will not display the identities of Weibo blog posts. However, based on the context of the blog post, it is possible to infer the regional identity of the author with a high probability. Therefore, as the first step of the analysis, I manually examined the content of each sentence and determine the author's regional identity. It turned out that two out of 152 硬盘 *Yingpan* sentences in the data were inferred to be written by migrants because both authors self-identify as 硬盘 *Yingpan* but in a self-mocking way.

(1) 上海友好海纳百川又不是一天两天了，保护当地人利益变成不友好了？一般对于这类说法，我能做的只能是取消关注，取消粉丝，作为一个硬盘还能鸵鸟的在上海多待几天。还能相信上海永远是海纳百川、友好滴。

Shanghai has been inclusive and friendly not for one or two days. Protecting the local citizens' rights becomes unfriendly? For this kind of discourse, all I can do is unfollow and unsubscribe. So, I as *Yingpan* can stay in Shanghai for a few days longer like an ostrich and believe Shanghai is forever inclusive and friendly.

[硬盘 post 23]

There is a paradox in this author's blog post: he disagrees with the statement that Shanghai is inclusive and friendly, but he pretends to believe it is true without listening to this type of statement. He borrows the idea of "ostrich mentality," which means he hides or refuses to confront the discourse of a non-friendly Shanghai. In addition, the adverb "还" 'still' and the quantifier "几天" 'a few days' exaggerate the migrants' plight in Shanghai. The adjective "永远" 'forever' is added by the author onto the original statement that damages the credibility of his claim in this context. In all, this exaggeration and the idea of ostrich mentality make fun of the statement about Shanghai's inclusiveness and migrant's status when he self-identifies as 硬盘 *Yingpan*.

(2) 俺就是一个来上海的外来务工人员，上海人眼中的硬盘，
民工都算不上了！

I am just a migrant worker in Shanghai, *Yingpan* in the
eye of Shanghainese is not as good as a migrant laborer.

[硬盘 post 29]

The self-mockery is more obvious in this example, in which the author uses "俺" 'I' and "民工" 'migrant laborer' to depict himself as a buffoon. "俺" is the first personal pronoun in the northern dialect and often characterized as rural person's tongue. "民工" 'the migrant laborer,' who has rural *hukou*, inferior occupation, and powerless status, is often referred to as the victim of social exclusion and urban underclass (Zhang, Zhu and Nyland, 1438). Moreover, this author claims a powerful statement that the new migrant's label 硬盘 *Yingpan* is more derogatory than "民工" 'migrant laborer' by means of self-identification and self-mockery.

Following the first step, I examined the lexical collocates of the keywords in each concordance and identified high-frequency attitudinal words used in the concordances.

Those high-frequency attitudinal words seemed to fit into taboo words, derogatory referential nouns, and imperative words. First, to identify the taboo words, Yin (1996)'s five categories of Chinese social taboo words were adopted, which include social hierarchy, blood lineage, sex and gender, death, and animal behavior. Thus, the followings taboo words were identified: 死 'death,' 狗 'dog,' 猪 'pig,' 鸡 'chicken,' 脑子坏的 'ill-minded,' 他妈的 'his mother,' and 妈逼的 'mother's vagina' from the examples below.

(3) 上海不欢迎死 YP。

Shanghai does not welcome those damned YP.

[YP post 11]

(4) 我们只把排斥上海，抹黑上海，污染上海的外地人叫 YP，被 YP 疯狗咬了下。

We only call YP to those migrants who exclude Shanghai, discredit Shanghai, and contaminate Shanghai. I got bite by a mad dog YP.

[YP post 4]

(5) 一大帮猪子，我在上海，想让所有在上海的 YP 消失。

A crowd of pigs. I am in Shanghai and want all YP in Shanghai to disappear.

[YP post 75]

(6) 硬盘滚出上海，素鸡以死谢天下。

Yingpan, get out of Shanghai, chicken go to die for peace.

[硬盘 post 17]

(7) 脑子坏的，上海人的地盘，上海人没抢你到先抢起来了。

Ill-minded, this is Shanghainese's territory.

Shanghainese has not been captured, but you just have started it.

[YP post 18]

(8) 有啥错，投诉你妹去他妈的 YP，支持上海话报站！

What is wrong? Sue your younger sister, motherfucking YP, support bus stop announcement to be in Shanghai language!

[YP post 16]

(9) 不爽就滚回去为什么要我们让步？死 YP 妈逼这都要投诉。
Get lost if you don't feel comfortable, why do you ask
us to give in? Damned YP. Why sue something like
this?

[YP post 92]

Taking example (4) for a qualitative analysis, animal names as a social taboo in Chinese manifest the user's disdainful attitude towards the migrants. The word 疯狗 'mad dog' and 咬 'bite' depict migrants as animals in this context while Shanghainese justify themselves in condemning the migrants because they speak evil of Shanghai. In this case, this author does not indiscriminately place the label YP onto all migrants. Instead, he explains his reason and clarifies the definition. Andersson & Trudgill (1992) argue that cursing imbues "covert prestige" and displays toughness and strength on its user (8-9). By cursing certain poor examples of migrants with mad dogs, this author secretly attempts to construct Shanghainese's image of urbane citizens and demonstrate their consciousness to defend their hometown Shanghai. In this way Shanghainese's prestige and superiority are expressed.

As discussed in Chapter II that *Xiangxia ren* and *Waidi ren* are two derogatory referential nouns in the Shanghai context, they also appear as collocates with the keyword 硬盘 and its pinyin acronym YP in the concordances.

(10) 滚回你的乡下去！上海不欢迎你这种垃圾你这种硬盘。
Go back to your rural area! Shanghai does not welcome
you, this kind of the trashy YP.

[硬盘 Post 28]

(4) 我们只把排斥上海，抹黑上海，污染上海的外地人叫 YP，
被 YP 疯狗咬了下。

We only call YP to those migrants who exclude
Shanghai, discredit Shanghai, and contaminate
Shanghai. I got bite by a mad dog YP.

[YP post 4]

In the example (10), the author associates the old derogatory referential term “*Xiangxia ren*” with migrants to make an imperative statement “go back to your rural area.” In the second part of the sentence, the author uses the abusive term “垃圾” ‘trash’ along with “硬盘” *Yingpan* to express Shanghai and Shanghainese’s superior prestige in terms of culture and economy compared to the backward rural area and the negative stereotype of migrants. It is the same as in the example (4), which has been analyzed. The derogatory referential terms and the taboo words all reflect Shanghainese’s superior tone while belittling migrants’ social status in Shanghai.

(11) 我们上海人说什么话轮得到你们 YP 管伐，不爽滚回去。

No matter what language we Shanghainese speak, it is
not for you YP to judge. If it discomforts you, just beat
it.

[YP Post 92]

The Chinese imperative word 滚 ‘roll’ that appears in example (10), which serves the same function as the English phrase “beat it” or “get lost,” is a dismissive way to ask someone to leave and often comes with a tone of superiority. The author of the example (11) conveys the relationship between the *self* and the *other*, in which Shanghainese (the *self*) demonstrate the power and disregard the migrants’ feelings. From contextualizing the keywords and attitudinal lexical items, it is helpful to analyze the authors’ speech act. Therefore, I compiled a list of attitudinal lexical items and ranked them by frequency.

Within the examples selected in the last step, besides Shanghainese's criticisms on the migrants and command for them to leave, other speech acts were performed by the blog post authors too. For instance, Shanghainese tried to argue with migrants about the usage of Shanghai language in the public transportation in the example (8). On the other hand, there are some sentences that do not contain curse words but also convey the same speech act. So, in this step, I examined the speech acts performed by each blog post's author and grouped concordances into four types of speech act: criticism on migrants, exclusivism, Shanghainese victimhood under migrant invasion and lamentation for the weakening Shanghai language. The example of each type of speech act is shown and analyzed below:

(12) 那些偷统统都是 YP, 请不要把在上海的 YP 叫做上海人!
Those thieves are all YP, please; don't call those YP,
who are in Shanghai, Shanghainese.

[YP Post 24]

The speech act of Shanghainese criticisms on the migrants has been practiced since these two classes have been divided. In example (6), the "all *Waidi ren* are thieves" stereotype is proposed. The author uses the word "统统" 'entirely' to overgeneralize that all the migrants are associated with theft crime. On one hand, the author convinces the audience that the crimes in Shanghai are caused by the migrants while beautifying Shanghainese's good citizen image on the other hand. Following this hyperbole, the author appeals to the audience to not recognize YP as Shanghainese because he/she wants to re-clarify the line between migrants and Shanghainese. The speech act of criticism on the migrants has a clear purpose, which is that Shanghainese want the audience to differentiate themselves from the migrants.

(13) 请此 YP 圆润的离开上海, 上海不需要不懂得入乡随俗的 YP。

Please leave Shanghai in a rounded form, Shanghai does not need YP who do not want to adopt Shanghai custom.

[YP Post 6]

Other than using the dismissive words 滚 ‘get lost’ or the imperative tone, a number of authors wield mild and indirect way to demonstrate their exclusivism. In the example (13), a rounded form has the metaphorical meaning of 滚 ‘get lost’ and implies the author’s exclusivist attitude, but the tone is soft. Although they all convey the same meaning, switching to a soft tone by choosing a different word can embody the speaker’s positive demeanor to the audience. The second part of this sentence indicates those migrants who do not want to adopt Shanghai customs, which can be a more civilized manner, a westernized lifestyle, and elegant demeanor. From this whole sentence, the audience can sense that the author is proud of the Shanghai culture and custom by enforcing it on himself/herself and advertising it.

(14) 上海都快被 YP 占领了!

Shanghai is almost fully occupied by YP

[YP Post 22]

(15) 上海老大是 YP 上海人说完就被周围一群 YP 围攻了。

The boss of Shanghai is YP. After Shanghainese speak, they are besieged by a swarm of YP.

[YP Post 9]

The speech act of Shanghainese self-victimizing is the opposite way of criticizing and using an imperative command to express the presence of migrants in Shanghai. Instead of demonstrating themselves as the host of Shanghai, Shanghainese portray themselves

as a weak group comparing to migrants in this society. Both example (10) and (11) deliver the message that migrants have become the dominant group in Shanghai: the word 占领 ‘occupy’ 一群 ‘a swarm,’ and 围攻 ‘siege’ illustrate a large number of migrants; the two time-words 说完 ‘end of speech’ and 就 ‘just’ again deliver the migrants’ omnipresent status and their attitudes towards the criticism by the local people in Shanghai.

(8)有啥错，投诉你妹去他妈的 YP，支持上海话报站！

What is wrong? Sue your younger sister, motherfucking
YP, support bus stop announcement in Shanghai
language!

[YP post 16]

(16)不少 YP 老师在学校里听到小朋友说上海话就批评小朋友血淋淋的事实啊！

A few teachers in primary school criticize the children
for talking in Shanghainese, that is a bloody fact!

[YP post 97]

The weakened Shanghai language and culture is one of the major reasons that Shanghainese self-victimize and attack the migrants. In the example (16), the author exposes a fact that the migrant teacher criticizes the children who speak Shanghai dialect in the elementary school. In addition, the adjective 血淋淋 ‘bloody’ intensifies the incident to call for a consensus of Shanghainese on the Internet. In another example (8), the author tries to curse the migrants who object to the utilization of Shanghai language in the public transportation. No matter what approach the author adopts, the speech act of Shanghainese’s lamentation for their language being weakened stands out in the concordances.

Frequency information about each type of speech act determines the significance of each of the four types of speech act. Contextualizing the collocates with the

keywords and categorizing by speech acts enable me to summarize the modern Shanghainese's motivation in marginalization against the migrants as well as to compare the difference between the modern and historical practice.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS

Of the 152 concordances, two of them are used by self-identified migrants referring to themselves, two third-party authors write in a neutral stance, and the overwhelming 147 (97%) sentences are produced by Shanghainese.

In the database, 53 out of 152 sentences (34.8%) explicitly contain discriminatory and exclusivist discourse. Seven different Chinese social taboo words are counted as 25 tokens in the database including zoological terms, gender and sex, death and euphemized cursing words, which are listed in Table. 1. *Xiangxia ren* and *Waidi ren* have the negative meaning in the context of Shanghai, so they are categorized into derogatory terms and listed in Table.2. Another very high-frequency controversial word is the Chinese imperative word 滚 that is equivalent to the English word ‘get lost.’

Table.1 Taboo Words

Chinese	English translation	Word frequency
死	death	10
狗	dog	4
鸡	chicken	3
脑子坏的	ill-minded	3
他妈的	his mother	2

妈逼的	his mother's vagina	2
猪	pig	1

Table.2 Derogatory Referential Terms

Chinese	English translation	Word frequency
乡下人	rural People	2
外地人	outsiders	9

Table.3 Imperative Word

Chinese	English translation	Word frequency
滚	get lost	17

91 out of 152 concordances are classified into four motifs: 28 concordances belong to the speech act of Shanghainese's criticism on migrants, 17 concordances explicitly display the speech act of Shanghainese's exclusivism, 27 concordances are about the speech act of Shanghainese self-victimizing under migrant invasion and nine concordances reflect the speech act of Shanghainese lamentation for their weakened culture and language. Among these four different types of the speech acts of Shanghainese, the criticism on migrants has been practiced since the arrival of *Subei ren* in the late Qing dynasty. Shanghainese's exclusivism was well-known at the

beginning of the Chinese communist economic reform, in which the migrants were despised and labeled as *Xiangxia ren*. However, the speech act of Shanghainese's victimhood and they lament over their weakening culture and language that break through our impression of the dominant position in Shanghai society. Therefore, I first discussed the usage of 硬盘 *Yingpan* and then expanded into a discussion of the new practice of Shanghainese's speech act in the society.

CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSION

The Code Word

Shanghai is famous for regionalism and exclusivism in China, and Shanghainese may have coined the most amount of derogatory referential terms for the migrants in the Chinese language. First, Shanghainese's arrogance and exclusivist character could be traced back to Jiangnan migrants' discrimination against *Subei ren* in the late 19th century and the early 20th century. Second, Shanghai's prosperity and unique culture made Shanghainese look down upon the rest of Chinese citizens by labeling migrants "*Xiangxia ren*" to manifest the Shanghainese superiority in the late 70s. On account of *Xiangxia ren*'s ignorant and backward meaning in the context of urbanization, the migrants complained about Shanghainese's discrimination against them in Shanghai. Third, the local government's promotion, media monitoring report, education and other external factors enforced Shanghainese to use *Waidi ren*, the official term for migrants in Chinese. The term *Waidi ren* gradually replaced *Xiangxia ren* for the sake of appeasing the discriminatory phenomena in Shanghai. Although *Waidi ren*'s literary meaning is "outsider" in Chinese, it has strong connotations of regionalism. In addition to the central government's segregation between the locals and the non-locals in the society under the *hukou system*, *Waidi ren* are associated with floaters, vagabonds and criminals. Therefore, *Waidi ren* had not endured long in lexicon before it became another derogatory term for migrants. Pinker's (2007) "euphemism treadmill" annotates there is always a new word to substitute its "predecessor"

because the negative connotation of its replacement is indelible (320). *Waidi ren* was once censored in KDS for preserving the friendly online community environment when Shanghainese netizens unscrupulously abused the migrants. In a result, 硬盘 *Yingpan* was coined to substitute *Waidi ren* and became the new referential noun for the migrants. However, 硬盘 *Yingpan* is a code word rather than a euphemism because of its limited domain of usage and its language environment.

硬盘人 *Yingpan ren*'s domain of usage is only restricted to be circulated on the Internet. It first appeared in Kuangdaishan Life (KDS), a Shanghai-based BBS (Bulletin Board System) and then was distributed by Shanghai netizens in other social media such as Weibo. The results illustrate that all the concordances are generated from Weibo, the Chinese microblogs. When contextualizing the concordances, 34.8% of data contain abusive words, which can be the main reason that keeps *Yingpan* from being spread to the other mediums. In fact, the practice of posting discourse in the text-form of Shanghai dialect in KDS is very common, which also attracts a large number of Shanghai netizens to join. As Shanghainese practice Shanghai dialect to exclude others in Shanghai, Shanghai dialect also serves as a jargon that naturally keeps migrants away from KDS and other Shanghai-based social media platforms or groups. From the practice of the written form of Shanghai dialect to the invention of 硬盘 *Yingpan*, Shanghai netizens attempt to construct a system of "code language" for the intra-communication within the group (Chen and Xu, 2015: 76). For example, to decode the hidden meaning of 硬盘 *Yingpan*, one has to know the brand name in English "Western Digital" and its main product, which is easily accessible and

comprehensible by the netizens in KDS. By coding the word, this practice can protect this community and freely convey the meaning, that is, Shanghainese not only express their anger towards the migrants but also avoid the direct conflicts with them. Therefore, 硬盘 *Yingpan* as a code word is not meant to be spread out to the other mediums.

Indeed, this code word that refers to migrants is not accepted by the addressees. The original definition of 硬盘 *Yingpan* is an electronic device that has no semantic relation with softening the derogatory meaning of *Waidi ren*. Although two migrant authors self-identified of 硬盘 *Yingpan* migrant in the concordances, the way they did was self-mockery. Ungar (1984) argues that self-mockery serves to acknowledge the incongruous behavior and to neutralize or correct the situation without creating new problems. Therefore, by making the humorous claim to admit as 硬盘 *Yingpan*, those two authors try to construct their debased selves to gain absolution for their true selves through laughter or ridicule (132). Furthermore, their action can draw attention to correct the indiscriminately labeling notion and stop using 硬盘 *Yingpan*. In conclusion, although the new term 硬盘 *Yingpan* for migrants is indirect, its original semantic meaning makes the addressees averse to it.

(4) 我们只把排斥上海, 抹黑上海, 污染上海的外地人叫 YP,
被 YP 疯狗咬了下。

We only call YP to those migrants who exclude
Shanghai, discredit Shanghai, and contaminate
Shanghai. I got bite by a mad dog YP.

[YP post 4]

When 硬盘 *Yingpan* has been decoded, some Shanghainese try to narrow down its definition to a certain group of migrants for decreasing the conflicts with the majority

of migrants. Along with the speech act of their victimhood, Shanghainese seems to be a very protective and vulnerable group, which is a result of its poor image constructed by mass media.

Shanghainese in Media

The coinage of 硬盘 *Yingpan*'s origin is from the publication of the newspaper article 新英雄闯荡上海滩, 不限户籍个个精英 'New Heroes make living in Shanghai, and each one of them is an elite no matter of his/her origin' on the February 4th, 2007, in which the author bluntly discusses that speaking Shanghai dialect is a sign of uncivilized manner in the Shanghai Pudong New Area. It is true that Shanghainese's economic domination has been challenged by the upper-class migrants in the recent years. Elite migrants from the rest of China contributed to the successful development of the New Pudong Area. Consequently, the New Pudong Area has been dwelled by a large number of upper-class migrants, and Mandarin is the dominant language instead of the Shanghai dialect. Although it is invalid and inappropriate to assert speaking Shanghai dialect as a sign of uncivilized manner in Pudong, the media has been unfriendly to Shanghainese for a long time.

The miracle of the Shanghai's urban development in modern Chinese history and the success of its economic reform after Mao's period have drawn the most attention from the media compared to other Chinese cities. As it has been the most westernized Chinese city, Shanghai's commercialization and secularization have become the journalists and scholars' report object. On one hand, the newspaper press reports the achievement of Shanghai's business environment while it also holds skepticism about

the humanism questions on the other hand. Shanghai media constantly criticize, reveal and discuss inequality in the Shanghai society such as the migrant, discriminatory and exclusive issues. Likewise, Shanghainese become the journalists and writers' writing material: *Shanghai ren de xingxiang* 'The image of Shanghainese,' *Waidi ren xin mu zhong de Shanghai ren* 'Shanghainese in the eye of migrants,' *90 niandai de Shanghai ren* 'Shanghainese in the 90s,' even *Choulou de Shanghai ren* (2008) 'The ugly Shanghainese' and many other articles all reflect the exclusivist character of the Shanghainese (Ma and Zhang, 2011: 182-205). Ironically, in this trend, writers started naming their books with negative headlines in order to make them more appealing to those readers, who have the same consensus of Shanghai and Shanghainese's poor impression. Like the book *Dasi bu zuo Shanghai nanren* (2004) 'Not to be a Shanghai man,' *Kepa de Shanghai ren* (2011) 'The fearful Shanghainese' and *Qianwan bie lai Shanghai* (2013) 'Don't come to Shanghai,' however, each of these books' contents praise Shanghai's culture and Shanghainese's strengths.

Under this public opinion, institutions and media in Shanghai have continuously called the citizens to correct their social manner and stress public morality for creating a harmonious society for both the locals and the migrants. However, Shanghainese are upset with this kind of media report because they are in an extremely weak position in the process of media representation, which massively influences the construction of Shanghainese's image in the nation. Ironically, on the Internet, there is a discourse circulated about the best compliment to Shanghainese is "you are not Shanghainese at all," where the speaker praises this person while criticizing the rest of Shanghai

citizens. In the rest of Chinese citizens' narrative of Shanghainese, they are astute, sordid, exclusivist, and arrogant. When a netizen, who has Shanghainese background, posts inappropriate discourse on the Internet, the criticisms they receive are often more intensive than those netizens who are not Shanghainese (Chen and Xu, 2015: 75).

Speaking of the image of migrants in the media, the media tend to have affirmative action while reporting them. Zhou and Lv (2011) conducted research on the image of migrants in the media by collecting four Shanghai local newspapers about the report of migrants. Zhou and Lv discovered that although the lower-class migrants appear as the “negative actor” in 40.9% of total frequency while 23.4% of frequency shows the migrants are the victims who struggle in Shanghai or are being discriminated against by Shanghainese. Comparing to the difference between the media reports of Shanghainese and migrants, Shanghainese as the historically dominant group is unfairly portrayed in the newspaper, and migrants have been favorably portrayed by the media. This social notion that an identifiable group of people is agreed to have been discriminated against in the past, in consequence of which they are now to be given an extra advantage is known as “reverse discrimination” (Barrow, 2015: 77).

This huge psychological gap triggered Shanghainese to express their dissatisfaction with migrants. Therefore, the notions that they create the system of hidden language in KDS and claim as victims under the invasion of migrants, demonstrate their orientation of a weak position in the social media.

Shanghai Dialect and Shanghainese's Identity

The presence of migrants has become a threat to Shanghai culture, language and thus the identity of Shanghainese. On one hand, Shanghainese express their resentment towards the lower-class migrants who cause security and environmental issues in Shanghai. On the other hand, the increasing number of upper-class migrants, challenges Shanghainese's superior position in Shanghai and makes the locals feel insecure about their prestigious culture, language, and resources. In all, the identity of Shanghainese is facing a great threat from two different migrant classes: the lower-class, who do not appreciate the local culture but have negative impact on the image of Shanghai, and the elite migrants, who have a high education or even a western education background, share the same privilege and social welfare with the locals and have another spectrum of culture and lifestyle. In Lei (2004)'s master's Thesis—*Code Choices by the Young Working Migrants in Shanghai*, his research determines that Mandarin has already established its absolute authority in the Shanghai upper middle-class migrants so they do not have or need the intention to study Shanghai dialect; whereas, the lower-class migrants have neglected the effort to learn Shanghai dialect since they have limited opportunities to interact with the local population.

Shanghai native culture collides with the expanding globalization influence represented by the migrants that affects the local culture weakened to a point where the Shanghai dialects are being marginalized. With fewer newcomers assimilating into Shanghai culture through the recognition of its superiority, and the new

generation of Shanghainese growing up without the public environment of speaking Shanghai dialect, the heritage of Shanghai culture and language are subdued under the wave of urbanization and globalization. Culture and language create and stabilize identity. Therefore, the real crisis for Shanghainese is the loss of their identity.

Although the Chinese neologism and social discriminations are both hot research subjects, previous scholars have rarely conducted research on the invention of derogatory neologisms in the association with social categories or unvolunteered labels. This study filled the gap by providing quantitative evidence of verbal discrimination against migrants, who suffer dislocation and displacement as a result of radical urbanization in contemporary China in a globalizing economy.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

Language reflects social dynamics and societal changes (Hymes 1964). This research explicates the meaning and usage of the neologism—硬盘 *Yingpan*, the new derogatory noun for labeling migrants in Shanghai. It reveals the ongoing social tension and discrimination in Shanghai against migrants, which reflects large-scale social antagonisms resulting from mass migration as part of globalization.

In contrast to the other, earlier, three terms *Subei ren*, *Xiangxia ren*, and *Waidi ren*, which all have a spatial meaning indicating the perceived geographical origins of migrants, 硬盘 *Yingpan* has no reference to space, migration, people or class. Its literal meaning objectifies the migrants it refers to, and the lack of geographical reference suggests that geography has become irrelevant in a globalizing world in which territorial boundaries between regions are blurred. More importantly, the verbal pejoration reveals the change of relationship between the natives and migrants in the context. It serves as a hidden code for Shanghainese to communicate within their own cyber community while *Subei ren*, *Xiangxia ren* and *Waidi ren* as the social slurs that have been practiced openly in the public. Although Shanghainese all use them to social categorize, criticize and vilify the migrants, 硬盘 *Yingpan* produces other speech acts such as Shanghainese self-victimization and lamentation over the weakened Shanghai dialect that are rarely mentioned in the previous terms' context before. Shanghainese's exclusivism has been criticized by the mass media, which causes Shanghainese to have become the weak group in the media compared to the other identity groups. Moreover, the linguistic phenomenon reflects the perception

that Shanghai local culture and language are weakened under the influence of globalization, which has brought more upper-class migrants to work in Shanghai and form a new identity. This new societal structure results a loss of the conventional Shanghainese identity and continuously provokes the conflicts between the locals and migrants.

Shanghai is not an isolated case. Beijing and Hongkong all have their own metaphorical derogatory terms for migrants. Nevertheless, Shanghai is a unique case to the extent that its traditional way of life as well as its local dialect is weakened due to globalization and migration, and this phenomenon has drawn attention from linguists. Notwithstanding the moderate database, this research will hopefully draw attention to both sides of the social tension: the identity crisis experienced by Shanghai people and to the notion of reverse discrimination that has emerged in Chinese society on the one hand, and the unjust treatment of the migrants from less developed regions who seek a better life in Shanghai, on the other hand.

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